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Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved, Volume 29, Number 1, February 2018, pp. 81-106 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press *DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2018.0009* 



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#### Measuring the Effect of Social Determinants on Patient Outcomes: A Systematic Literature Review

Andrew J Knighton, PhD, CPA Brad Stephenson Lucy A Savitz, PhD, MBA

*Abstract:* Given the movement towards value-based purchasing in the United States, health care leaders need methods to characterize and address the complex effect that social determinants have on health care outcomes. This systematic literature review was specifically designed to understand current research on the effect that patient material and social deprivation has on health care delivery outcomes and the potential benefit of clinical interventions designed to mediate this effect. A total of 310 studies were identified for review with 80 studies included in the final synthesis. Results highlight significant variation in the methods used to measure the effect of social determinants on health care outcomes and the need for common measurement standards. More robust identification of deprivation-sensitive diseases or conditions is needed to channel scarce program resources to effected conditions. Finally, further research is needed to evaluate the benefits of data-driven, tailored clinical interventions designed to serve the needs of materially-deprived patient populations.

*Key words:* Social determinants of health, population health, health care organizations, material deprivation, delivery systems, socioeconomic status, patient outcomes, quality improvement, evaluation.

**P**opulation health follows a social gradient.<sup>1</sup> People who are economically and/ or socially less deprived have better health outcomes.<sup>1,2</sup> Social determinants of health ("social determinants") are defined by the World Health Organization as "the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness"<sup>3</sup> [p.1]</sup> and describe the social, economic and political processes and relationships that can influence key health outcomes.<sup>3</sup> People higher on the social gradient generally have more favorable social determinants that affect health.<sup>1</sup> Payer demand for more value-based purchasing of health care that holds health care organizations responsible for health care outcomes increases the need for these organizations to understand how social determinants affect outcomes and population health in the context of health care delivery.

The term deprivation is used in the literature to describe the "disadvantaged position

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of an individual, family or group relative to the society in which they belong" [200] and has economic and social dimensions.<sup>1</sup> Material deprivation includes the lack of basic resources for living and is closely related to measures of socio-economic status and poverty.<sup>4</sup> Social deprivation describes the lack of support provided by other persons.<sup>5</sup> Material and social deprivation are correlated.<sup>6-7</sup> Both forms of deprivation can be measured at either the person or ecologic level and are shown to have independent effects on health.<sup>1</sup> Research suggests that patients who are more materially deprived or that come from more materially deprived neighborhoods have poorer health care outcomes, including increased mortality,<sup>8</sup> higher emergency department (ED) utilization,<sup>9</sup> increased readmission risk,<sup>10</sup> delays in time to diagnosis and treatment,<sup>11-12</sup> poorer medication adherence,<sup>13</sup> and less effective engagement in shared decision making.<sup>14</sup>

A proposed causal pathway between lower socioeconomic status and poor health care outcomes includes more limited access to care (result: inadequate treatment and increased risk of complications), lower quality of care and poorer self-care behaviors (including diet and exercise).<sup>15</sup> More recent theories point to related issues including patient health literacy<sup>16</sup> or patient activation and engagement<sup>17</sup> as contributing factors. As a result, barriers to receiving equitable care may include limited resources to obtain care, communication difficulty between the patient and the provider and challenges navigating the health care delivery system.<sup>18</sup> The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI),<sup>19</sup> the Institutes of Medicine (IOM),<sup>20</sup> the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM)<sup>4</sup> and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)<sup>21</sup> have each proposed frameworks to characterize these relationships.

The purpose of this study was to characterize the results of recent published research on two critical questions facing health care organizations. First, how does patient or area deprivation modify the effect of standard of care interventions? Second, what targeted or design interventions modify the effect of patient or area deprivation on health care outcomes? Understanding the relationship between material deprivation and health care outcomes can assist health care organizations in designing effective interventions that address the potentially distinct needs of these more vulnerable populations, reduce health care disparities and lower the cost of care delivery.

#### Methods

A systematic review of the peer-reviewed literature was conducted. Research into health and health care disparities is an extremely broad topic. The Conceptual Framework of Social Risk Factors for Healthcare Use, Outcomes and Cost ("the Framework") developed by NASEM was the basis for development of the analytic framework for the review as noted in Figure 1.<sup>4</sup>

The PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparator, Outcomes) model for clinical questions was applied based upon the analytic framework presented in Figure 2 to refine the research scope.<sup>22</sup>

Evidence supports utilization of the PICO framework to improve searching PubMed and other data bases for clinical questions.<sup>23</sup> Following the PICO model, the following terms were set:



Figure 1. National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) conceptual framework for social risk factors for healthcare use, outcomes, and cost.

(A) How does patient or area deprivation modify the effect of standard care interventions in the US and Canada?



(B) What targeted or design interventions may mediate the effect of patient/area deprivation on healthcare outcomes in the US and Canada?



Figure 2. Analytic frameworks for conducting systematic review.

- Population = All U.S. or Canadian patients receiving health care at a delivery system for any disease or condition
- Intervention or exposure = Deprivation or poverty and related clinical interventions
- Comparator = Delivery system interventions designed to mitigate the effect of deprivation on health care outcomes
- Outcomes = Health care outcomes including mortality, morbidity, utilization, cost, patient/clinician behaviors

Based upon this model, the following initial query was developed and run in PubMed in August 2015. A subsequent update to the query was run in May 2016 to capture more recent studies.

[("patient deprivation" OR "area deprivation" OR "neighborhood deprivation" OR "community deprivation" OR "social deprivation" OR "deprivation index" OR "social determinants" OR "socio-economic status" OR "socioeconomic status" OR "poverty" OR "high school education" OR "household income"] **AND** [("United States" OR "Canada")] **AND** [("health system" OR "health care "OR "integrated health system" OR "delivery system")]

Despite differences in payment systems, Canadian studies were included given Canada's close geographic proximity to the United States, its similar standard of medical care and the similar challenges faced by both healthcare systems in addressing the needs of underserved populations. Study criteria were limited to systematic reviews, observa-

tional and experimental studies, case reports, and evaluation studies performed in the past 10 years and reported in English in PubMed. Title and abstract screening criteria was used to exclude studies that met the criteria listed in Box 1. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) model was used to report results as noted in Figure 3.<sup>24</sup> Once the final set of peer-reviewed articles was identified, studies were further classified based upon study design type (observational versus experimental), deprivation measure type (by characteristic measured and measurement method used), disease or condition classification, primary study outcomes (classified using the NASEM Framework (Figure 1)), and health care delivery system intervention components.

Consistent with the analytic framework presented in Figure 2, two sets of studies were identified. The first set of studies included observational studies (n=66) that specifically examined the effect modification of deprivation on existing standard of care interventions and related health care outcomes. Patient-level studies assessed the underlying risk factors associated with deprivation, patient behaviors and health care outcomes. Clinician-level studies included understanding the association between patient deprivation and disparities in encounter-level clinician behavior. Characteristics of health care delivery system performance associated with disparities in health care outcomes were also included. Given the frequency of use, studies using insurance status as a proxy for deprivation were included despite limitations using this approach as noted in the Discussion section.

The second set included experimental and quasi-experimental studies (n=14) that identify targeted or design interventions that may mediate the impact of patient or area deprivation on health care outcomes. Health care intervention components included enhanced clinical content, workflow redesign, additional care support, and/or the

#### Box 1

#### EXCLUSION CRITERIA FOR ABSTRACT SCREENING

- Patients <18 years of age</li>
- Cohorts from outside the US/Canada
- Limited to discussion of research methods or study protocol
- Limited to examining the association between deprivation and the general incidence or prevalence of a disease in the general population
- Limited to evaluating race-ethnicity only with no measure of social determinants
- Limited to broad structural issues with the broad national or regional health system or the patient environment (home)
- Studies evaluating structural disparities across payer types
- Population-based studies conducted outside a specific health system that examined patient experiences with the healthcare system generally were excluded.
- Specialty-based non-medical care (dentistry, optical, etc.)
- General relevance to the research questions



Figure 3. Results of systematic literature review.

introduction of new technologies to enable non-traditional patient and clinician interaction. Within this set, studies were further classified to identify those studies that were performed in a health care setting or with a cohort of patients selected from a health care setting from those performed in the general population. Interventions were also classified based upon phase of treatment (screening/prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring/follow up), location of care (inpatient, ED, primary care) and intervention components (such as evaluation and counseling).

#### Results

A total of 310 studies were identified for review with 80 studies included in the final synthesis as described in Figure 3. The initial and subsequent queries identified a set of 307 articles for analysis. An additional 3 articles were identified from reviewing references included in the article set. Primary reasons for exclusion of studies after the title/abstract screening included population age (n=48), studies limited to evaluating

race/ethnicity as the primary measure of social determinants (n=38), studies outside the US and Canada (n=35), and studies limited to examining the association between deprivation and the general incidence or prevalence of disease in the general population (n=31). A total of 93 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. Primary additional exclusions included studies that were limited to broad structural issues with the national or regional system or that evaluated structural disparities across payer type that focused specifically on insurance plan design and access (n=11).

Deprivation measures used in the studies were focused almost exclusively on material deprivation. Only a limited number of studies included elements of social deprivation.<sup>25–27</sup> Given this, the term material deprivation will be used in describing review results. Meaningful variation existed in the characteristics measured to determine material deprivation status (individual versus neighborhood) and the measurement methods used (individual or person-level, neighborhood-compositional, neighborhood-contextual) noted in Table 1.

Summarizing overall results by frequency of measures used (n=154), 86% of the material deprivation measures used were based upon person-level characteristics involving three distinct methods. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of person-level measures were patient self-reported measures of individual characteristics. The most common individual characteristics included a combination of income, education, payer status, employment status or Federal Poverty Level status of the individual. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of person-level measures involved a neighborhood compositional estimate used to estimate individual deprivation. The most common measures were similar combinations to direct capture of individual characteristics but were averaged at a small-area level and then assigned to patients based upon address of residence. The majority of these small-area methods used measures of the neighborhood boundaries based upon ZIP code followed by census tract. The remaining 5% of person-level measures used neighborhood contextual measures to describe deprivation characteristics of individuals. The most common of these was to use patient admission to a specific hospital located in a particular deprived neighborhood to define the deprivation status of the patient (i.e., the patient was considered materially deprived because they were admitted to a hospital that resides in a neighborhood defined as deprived). The use of neighborhood characteristics to define material deprivation status were used less frequently (14% of total measures used). Three similar measurement methods were used with the frequency more evenly distributed by method as noted in Table 1.

Summarizing results by study (n=80), 50% of studies (39/80) used a single measure of material deprivation—generally income or payer status. The remaining studies used multiple measures with five studies (6%) using some form of composite measure.

Contextually, studies of the impact of material deprivation on patient outcomes varied by disease type as noted in Table 2. Summarizing results by disease or condition studied, cancer was most frequent (36%), followed by cardiovascular (16%), all-cause disease studies (15%), and diseases of the endocrine system (primarily diabetes) (9%).

Classifying observational studies using the NASEM Conceptual Framework, most studies noted significant variation in health care outcomes as material deprivation increased. Material deprivation was associated with access to care/treatment received.<sup>18,28-30</sup> Material deprivation was negatively associated with patient behavior

#### Table 1.

# MEASURED DEPRIVATION CHARACTERISTICS BY MEASUREMENT METHOD USED

	Measurement Method Used				
		Neighborhood		Total	
Measured Characteristic	Person-level	Compositional	Contextual	Measures	% Total
Person-level Characteristics Measured:					
Income	27	18		45	29%
Education	22	6		28	18%
Payer type	19	0		19	12%
Employment status	8	1		9	6%
Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	3	4		7	5%
Admission to specific hospital			7	7	5%
Race	4			4	3%
Home value/Wealth		3		3	2%
English proficiency	3			3	2%
SES/Not clear		3		3	2%
Migration status/Nativity	2			2	1%
Financial strain	1	1		2	1%
Social support	1			1	1%
Subtotal Individual Characteristics	90	36	7	133	86%
Neishberg Obernsteintig Manager					
Neighborhood Characteristics Measured:				-	0.0/
Neighborhood poverty	1	2	2	5	3%
Urban/rural status			4	4	3%
Neighborhood aesthetics	1		1	2	1%
Social support	1		1	2	1%
Neighborhood vigilance	1			1	1%
Neighborhood problems	1			1	1%
Neighborhood violence		1		1	1%
Social cohesion/trust	1			1	1%
Income		1		1	1%
Education		1		1	1%
Access to healthy food			1	1	1%
Employment		1		1	1%
Subtotal Neighborhood Characteristics	6	6	9	21	14%
2					
Total Measures	96	42	16	154	100%
Percentage Total Measures	62%	27%	10%	100%	
% Subtotal Person-Level Characteristics	68%	27%	.5%	100%	
% Subtotal Neighborhood Characteristics	29%	29%	43%	100%	
/ Sustatul Neighborhood Sharacteristics	2370	2370	-J /0	100 /0	

risk factors that affect health care outcomes including use of preventive care,<sup>31-37</sup> timing of diagnosis and resolution,<sup>13,27,34, 37-41</sup> demonstration of self-care behaviors (including treatment adherence),<sup>25,42-43</sup> and disease control.<sup>44-45</sup>

Studies capturing the effect of material deprivation on the clinical care process including provider or health system behaviors suggest variability in treatment given;<sup>14,46-58</sup> undertreatment;<sup>59-62</sup> delayed treatment;<sup>63</sup> higher failure to rescue rates;<sup>64</sup> effectiveness of clinician communication;<sup>18</sup> and other effects.<sup>26,65-68</sup> Material deprivation was associated with increased inpatient length of stay;<sup>54,69-70</sup> increased hospitalizations,<sup>71-72</sup> higher inpatient readmissions;<sup>73–74</sup> higher hospital transfer rates;<sup>75</sup> and other effects.<sup>76–77</sup> Study findings included both increases in Emergency Department (ED) visits<sup>44,78</sup> and no effect.<sup>79</sup> The effect of deprivation on primary care visits varied by age.<sup>44,79</sup> All three studies that included costs included lower inpatient costs for materially deprived patients, generally associated with fewer procedures performed and possible undertreatment.<sup>54,63,66</sup>

Other health care outcomes associated with material deprivation included higher rates of mortality,<sup>46,50,55,58,63–64,70,80–86</sup> increased complication rates,<sup>44,64,69</sup> and lower quality of life following care.<sup>44,87–88</sup>

Examining experimental studies, 14 studies had some form of intervention that either directly or indirectly addressed the potential impact of patient or area material deprivation on health care outcomes. Of these, 13 were conducted within a health care organization or using patient data directly from a health care organization and are listed in Table 3. Nine of 13 studies used person-level measures of material deprivation

#### Table 2.

#### System/Disease Count Citation Number<sup>b</sup> Breast 11 26, 27, 31, 32, 37, 38, 47, 48, 53, 90, 97 Colo-rectal 6 34, 35, 36, 49, 62, 66 Cervical 3 27, 32, 96 4 50, 55, 81-82 Lung 7 All Types/Other 33, 40, 43, 46-47, 64, 88 Total Cancer 31 36% Hypertension 3 30, 68, 99 3 Stroke 54, 70, 86 Other 8 51, 57-58, 63, 80, 84, 85, 100 Total Cardiovascular 14 16% Not Disease Specific (All-Cause) 13 15% 14, 18, 29-30, 38, 56, 59, 65, 72, 74, 78-79, 101 9% Endocrine (diabetes) 8 13, 43, 45, 61, 91, 93-95 Other 5 6% 44, 52, 69, 87, 100 4 5% 25, 39, 71, 73 Pulmonary Mental Health 3 3% 89, 96, 98 Renal 3 3% 42, 76, 83 Immunological 2 2% 31, 91 Pregnancy and Childbirth 1 1% 60 Trauma 2 2% 67,75 Total 86 100%

# SUMMARY OF IN-SCOPE STUDIES BY SYSTEM AND/OR DISEASE TYPE<sup>a</sup>

Note:

<sup>a</sup>Studies involving >1 disease type are listed multiple times (n=6).

<sup>b</sup>Please refer to list of references at the end of this paper.

# Table 3.

# STUDIES EXAMINING TARGETED OR DESIGN INTERVENTIONS TO MEDIATE THE IMPACT OF DEPRIVATION ON HEALTHCARE OUTCOMES

Intervention tailored to specific needs of deprived patients?	Use of basic text messaging and voice aligns with resources arailable to low SES patients	Design of education materials tailored to needs of low-income patients	2	2	PSA intervention design was segmented by income level	Tailored phone courseling and print materials designed to address needs of low income, minority women
Results	Effective in helping low-SES patients reach optimal insulin glargine	Improved outcomes in patients using electronic versus print educational materials	Effective in improving the patient care experience in a safety net setting	Did not lead to improved hyperhansion control	Increased patient engagement in depression care	Improved colposcopy rates among low- income, minory women
Primary Outcome	Patient achieves optimal insulin glargine dose in 12 weeks	Changes in patient medication knowledge, patient reported e decisional e decisional satisfaction with information	Patient's care experience	Hipertension	Clinician reported discussion of suicidal fhoughts	Adherence raite
Deprivation Measurement	Self-identified education, income, insurance status	Employment status, education, language, income	Education, household income, employment, health insurance	Employment status, education, income, insurance status	Ihoome, education level	Education, race, employment status
Technology	Text messaging, voice	Web-based	In-person, telephonic	Web-based content; telephonic	Computed- based intervention	Telephonic
Location of Care	Primary care	Primary care	Hospital	Primary care	Primary care	Hospital outpatient
Phase of Care	Patient monitoring and follow up	Patient treatment	Patient treatment	Patient	Patient diagnosis	Patient diagnosis
Care Intervention	Daily request for fasting blood glucose levels, nurse titration calls	Electronically delinered delinered delinered education, risk assessment, current medications, goals and actions	Administrative assistance, psychsocial support, psychsocial support, treatment, support communication	Patient education, home BP montation, lifestyle counselling	PSA tailored MCP or control	Telephone reminder and barriers assessment plus (1) tailored telephone counselting or (2) biochrue or (3) nothing.
e	61	8	19	8	298	31
Disease(s)	Diabetes	Diabeles	Breast Cancer	Hipertension	Depression	Cervical cancer
Purpose	Conduct pilot study using test mess saging and phone calls to support patients in achieving optimal insulin glargine dose within 12 weeks	Compare outcomes between community health health more use of a tailored, underactive. Web-based, taileteractive. Web-based taileteraction at use of print educational	Determine if breast cancer patent navigation inproves hauthcare empowerment	Obtain data on Implementation of exidence-based multitude-interventions hypertensive African Americans who receive earlier in Nov-resource primary care practices.	Determine whether a largehol depression public service (PSA) or announcement (PSA) or an	Impact of a tailored telephone counseling intervention on increasing follow-up achiertora after an abriormal Pap smear result among low- momen
Title	The Mcbile Insulin Titration Intervention (MTI) for insulim adjustment in an urban, low- income population: randomized combolled trial.	Comparison of community health worke-red diabeles medication-making support for one-hoome Latino and African Amelion and aeres wing E- health with a sersus print materials	Improving healthcare empowernent through treast cancer patient navigation: a mixed methods evaluation in a safety net setting	Counseling African Americans to Control Hypertration (CAMTCH) Cluster Randonizer Clinical Trial Main Effects	The effect of targeted and allowed patent depression engagement interventions on patent-syntysion discussion of suiddal troughts: a randomized control trail.	Tailored telephone counseling to improve adherence to follow up, regimera ather an abnormal page smear annorg minority, undersened women
First Authori Ref	Levy N <sup>34</sup>	Heisler M <sup>80</sup>	Gabilove G <sup>st</sup>	Ogeodeghe G	Sheh R <sup>el</sup>	Miler SM*
Pub	2015	2014	2014	2014	2014	2013

# Table 3. (continued)

Intervention tailored to specific needs of deprived patients?	9	2	Narigation support specific to the needs of indigent women	2	Telephone intervention designed to meet needs of urban poor	2	Design of psycho-social care models
Results	Deprivation moderated the effectiveness of the intervention	Low filization among HIV patients living in lower SES neighborhoods	Did not lead to more timely diagnostic resolution.	Effective in reducing depression in older patients versus younger patients minority patients	Significant increase in number of diabetic rethropathy screening exams during 6 months.	Lowered risk for CM wersus usual primary care - strategies needed for low income populations	High patient satisfaction and impowements in health along with reduced readmissions
Primary Outcome	Usual care / intervention	Utilization of specific HIT functionality	Timely diagnostic resolution of identified breast achromathy	Depression, status, functional outcomes, outcomes	Documentation of disbetic retinopathy screen within 6 months of randomization	Frantigten fisk	Unitation, cost
Deprivation Measurement	Census had porenty, financial strain, education	Neightochood SES (Income, education)	Visit ba county hospital br care in urban LA	hoome	Receiving care at one of three hospitals in low- income neighborhoods	home	Payer status
Technology	In-person. Telephonic	Web-based content	Teleptonic	Telephonic	Telephonic	In-person home visit	
Location of Care	Primary care	Delvery systems	Hospital outpatient	Pimary care	Pimaycae	Primary care	Hospital
Phase of Care	Patient treatment	Patient monitoring and billow up	Patient diagnosis	Patient treatment	Patient screening prevention	Patient monitoring and follow up	Patient monitoring and follow up
Care Intervention	Depression care manager promotes guidelines based reatment, follow up	View medical results, use secure messaging, request appls, refills	Patient education, Patient bucation, barriers to care, dentify community resources deliveration professional health worker (PHM) and lay health worker.	Education pamphiets, listing of community care resources.	Assess readiness, choices and barriers to screening	Nurse and dietition home risits	Gare manager mieradion
	10	882	1291	1.081	Ŧ	<u>8</u>	<b>2</b>
Disease(s)	Depression	NH	Breast cancer	Depression and other physical liness (cancer, diabetes, other co-morbid liness)	Diabetes	Coonery heart disease	Chronic illness
Purpose	Determine if economic disadvantage reduces the effectiveness of depression treatments received in primary care	Compare use of shared electronic medical record features by adult patients with HIV	Assess effectiveness of a patient support and neveration inter-ention in moreasing threfy diagnostic resolution of abnormal breast findings among indigent women	Compare the effectiveness of collaborative depression care between older and younger adults with comortid illness in low- income populations.	Compare effectiveness of a tationed telephone interventions to promide refinopathy screening compared to standard print intervention	Introduce cardiorescular risk reduction case management program (Heart to Heart)	Conduct plot study that integrates medical and social care for patients with chronic diseases
Title	Connortic inequalities in the effectiveness of a primary care intervection for depression and suicidal ideation.	Use of web-based shared medical records among patients with HIV.	Low-income women with abromal breast findings inresults of a andomized hal to inresults of diagnostic resolution.	Collaborative depression heatment in older and younger adults with physical illness: adults with physical illness adults with physical illness reas.	Telephone intervention to promote diabetic refiniopathy screening among the urban poor.	Implementing cardiac risk- factor case management lessons learned in a county health system.	The AD-LIFE trial working to integrate medicial and psychosocial care management models.
First Author/ Ref	olmen SE <sup>a</sup>	Raiston JD <sup>16</sup>	и 12 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15	BIK	Waker EA <sup>®</sup>	Berra K <sup>to</sup>	Wingfet K 10
Pear Year	2013	2013	2010	2010	2008	2002	2007

#### Table 4.

## FREQUENCY OF SERVICE COMPONENTS USED IN INTERVENTIONS (N=13 STUDIES)

Service components	Frequency Counts	Citation number <sup>b</sup>
Disease education	9	89-90, 93, 95, 97-101
Evaluation/Assessment	7	90-91, 93-94, 96, 100-101
Counseling/emotional support	6	91, 96–97, 99–101
Navigate health system	4	90, 92, 100, 101
Ongoing Disease Monitoring/Reporting	3	92, 94, 99
Alert/Reminder	2	96, 98
Identify community resources	2	90, 95
Support physician communication	2	89, 97
Treatment planning	1	93
Administrative support	1	97
Mean components utilized per study	2	
Note:		
<sup>a</sup> Some studies may have multiple components. <sup>b</sup> Please refer to list of references at the end of this	s paper.	

(income, education, employment, insurance status). The remaining studies used either neighborhood compositional,<sup>89</sup> neighborhood contextual factors,<sup>90-91</sup> or a combination of individual and neighborhood composite factors<sup>92</sup> to estimate person-level material deprivation status. The most common diseases/conditions studied included diabetes (4),<sup>91,93-95</sup> cancer (4),<sup>90,95-97</sup> and depression (3).<sup>89,96,98</sup> The studies covered most aspects of the health care process including disease prevention,<sup>91</sup>diagnosis,<sup>90,96,98</sup> treatment,<sup>89,93,95,97,99</sup> and patient monitoring and follow up.<sup>92,94,100,101</sup> The most common enhanced service elements included patient education, evaluation and counseling as noted in Table 4. Services were delivered on-line, telephonically or in-person.

Of the 13 intervention studies, seven included interventions with specifically adapted intervention components directly designed to address the needs of more materially deprived patients. These interventions considered assumptions regarding the underlying characteristics of materially deprived patients and how they would interact with the health care delivery system including access to telephonic/data resources,<sup>94</sup> design and content of education materials,<sup>93</sup> and tailored counseling<sup>96</sup> that addressed specific needs of more materially deprived patients. Six of these studies found improvements in patient outcomes following the introduction of an intervention including increased patient engagement,<sup>98</sup> improved regimen adherence,<sup>91,96</sup> improved disease control,<sup>94</sup> improved patient outcomes<sup>93</sup> and increased patient satisfaction.<sup>101</sup> The remaining intervention study found no improvement following intervention in timely diagnostic resolution among indigent women.<sup>90</sup> No interventions were designed to provide information on patient material deprivation status that could inform clinicians directly at the point of care.

#### Discussion

A growing body of evidence points to a correlation between patient material deprivation and health care disparities. However, questions remain. Under what conditions does material deprivation affect the health care experience and health care outcomes? Does it vary by disease? How do patient versus neighborhood-level measurement methods influence results? When should health care delivery systems tailor care to the needs of materially deprived patients? What interventions are most effective in reducing disparities in care? Studies on interventions specifically designed to mediate the impact of material deprivation were limited overall and by specific contexts, including patient- or neighborhood-level characteristics, disease or condition type, phase of the care process, place of service and the intervention components.

**Measuring patient material deprivation**. Proper identification of materially deprived patients is an important first step in efforts to measure the true scope of disparities in health care outcomes and to evaluate delivery interventions. Two distinct groups of material deprivation measures emerged from this review—person- and neighborhood-level measures—that were often used interchangeably. More precisely, measurements of individual deprivation status are designed to measure an individual patient's circumstances using patient self-reported measures including income, education level and employment status. Such measures are linked to health and health care outcomes by measuring patient capacity. Neighborhood or small-area measures are designed to characterize at a more macro-level the circumstances in which the patient lives, including contextual factors that influence health and health care outcomes. Local environmental economic and social conditions have been linked to general health outcomes through the interaction of individuals with their local community.<sup>102-107</sup>

Traditional measures of person-level material deprivation including race and insurance status remain common due to data availability but are increasingly problematic as measures of material deprivation. Race is a complex construct with potential to characterize both genetic and social elements.<sup>108</sup> While race has been historically linked to material deprivation in certain populations, evidence of health disparities in poorer white populations is increasing.<sup>109</sup> Asian Americans males now have the highest median income of any racial group.<sup>110</sup> As a measure of deprivation, insurance status is transitory in nature. Eligibility requirements for Medicaid patients are also highly specific, limiting identification of deprivation within certain populations, including adult males, non-child bearing women and the elderly.<sup>111</sup> Other common measures including education, income and occupational status have strengths and weaknesss.<sup>112–113</sup>

More recent developments in the United States include the introduction of deprivation indices common in Western European countries, designed to provide a geographic based view of material and social deprivation experiences by neighborhood. These composite measures include a combination of several risk factors associated with population characteristics such as mortality or morbidity.<sup>114</sup> When used, considerable variation exists in the geographic breakdown of these index measures. Neighborhood units of measure in these studies included counties, ZIP codes, U.S. census tracts and block groups as well as urban/rural designations. The most common measure used was ZIP code, which is an artificial construct developed by the U.S. Postal System to efficiently deliver mail and has little association with actual neighborhood-level interaction. Census tract small areas approximate neighborhood constructs better than ZIP code.<sup>115-116</sup>

Local and national standardization of a common set of measures and measurement methods designed to identify both materially and socially deprived patients for planning, research or clinical care within a health care setting is needed. Some researchers have argued for the use of multiple measures of socio-economic status in research with the selection of specific measures linked to the appropriate health care outcomes.<sup>112-113</sup> Multi-level measures of deprivation status that incorporate both person-level and neighborhood-level characteristics into a single, two-dimensional bundled measure should be evaluated. Capturing the bundled components separately would support analysis into the relative weighting of person-level and neighborhood-level deprivation status set of characteristics that include social support elements as well would improve understanding of the underlying mechanisms promoting disparities in care.<sup>107</sup>

**Material deprivation and health care outcomes by disease.** A proposed causal pathway between lower socioeconomic status and poor health care outcomes includes poorer access to care (result: inadequate treatment and increased risk of complications), lower quality of care and poorer self-care behaviors (including diet, exercise).<sup>15</sup> This is reflected in the more recent NASEM Framework included in Figure 1.

More recent theories are examining inequities in patient outcomes through understanding underlying variation in the burden of disease on similar patients. Patient burden of disease varies by individual patient characteristics including patient living circumstances, capacity and resilience.<sup>117</sup> As a result, health care outcomes for a similar disease of similar severity may vary by person. Using this theory, high-burden diseases requiring regular access to care or a high level of self-care, for example, to maintain disease control, may disproportionately affect deprived patients leading to poorer health care outcomes for these groups. The concentration of studies in this systematic review in patients with cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental health and other chronic conditions suggests that material deprivation may produce greater disparity in health care outcomes in diseases with a high burden that require regular care access, self-efficacy, activation and engagement.

Identification of potentially deprivation-sensitive diseases or conditions, including the relative impact of specific diseases or conditions on health care outcomes, could assist delivery systems in the design and development of disease-specific pathways that address the potentially distinct health care needs and available social supports of deprived patients with specific diseases. Other contextual factors that may influence the effect of patient material deprivation on health care outcomes should be evaluated.

Mediating the effect of material deprivation on health care outcomes. The initial studies identified through this systematic review highlight the potential positive impact that certain interventions can have on health care outcomes for materially deprived patients by addressing patient resource, communication and navigation barriers. Research into the effect of material deprivation on health care outcomes is highly contextual. Future studies should examine intervention effects in light of disease or condition type, the phase of the care process and the accessibility of technology and so forth. Potentially generalizable elements of any intervention including patient counseling, education, alert and monitoring, and communication, should be tailored by contextual factors.

Introduction of lay support resources present one interesting and potentially costeffective approach to addressing the needs of materially deprived patients.<sup>90,118</sup> Evidence suggests that material deprivation is linked to increased social isolation that can have negative effects on health outcomes.<sup>7,119</sup> Interventions designed to mitigate the effects of isolation have potential to improve health care outcomes.<sup>120</sup> The presence of informal social supports including extended family, neighborhood and community resources are positively associated with better health care outcomes and present an important avenue for further study.<sup>121</sup>

It is worth noting the role of technology as a delivery mechanism for addressing shortcomings in more traditional in-person interactions between clinicians and patients. The underlying enabler for patient-clinician interaction in the majority of these solutions is communications technology which, given its relative ease of use, low cost and ubiquitous nature, has the potential to deliver health care solutions that transcend socio-economic class.<sup>122</sup> Communications technology also has the potential to reduce social isolation.

**Conclusion and future research**. Health services research regarding the impact of deprivation on health care outcomes is fragmented with limited interventions in place. Identifying a measure of social determinants that applies across diverse settlement patterns and is readily available holds promise to address unmet measurement needs in evaluating impact of social determinants on effective treatment, quality improvement and value-based purchasing. There is a need to expand studies beyond select chronic conditions and to establish clear associations between deprivation and patient outcomes by disease type or condition, perhaps leading to the identification of deprivation-sensitive diseases most affected by patient deprivation. Similar work is needed to examine other contextual effects. More research is needed to examine the effect of deprivation in the context of care delivery including understanding and testing interventions specifically designed to mediate the impact of deprivation on health care outcomes for these more vulnerable populations.

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